



# THE FOREST OF NISENE MARKS STATE PARK • GENERAL PLAN

Newsletter #3

June 2001

## **Summary of Public Workshops**

Two public workshops on the General Plan for The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park were held on March 11 and April 7, 2001 at Soquel High School. Over 200 people attended the two meetings. Public comment was taken and questionnaires about the park and the General Plan were distributed. The meetings were the first two of the General Plan process and their purpose was to identify the range of issues to be addressed in the General Plan.

Almost 200 comments have been received to date from individuals, organizations, and agencies. The comments include speakers at the workshops, letters, questionnaire responses, and emails.

From the comments received to date, it is clear that the level of community interest in The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park is extensive. The park is highly valued by its users, many of whom visit on a weekly or more frequent basis. Some of the major issues facing the park include:

- Trail use - what types of uses are appropriate in which areas of the park and how are trails maintained?
- Which uses are compatible with resource protection?
- The lack of park staffing - and the impact on enforcement of regulations, safety, and maintenance.
- Parking and access for the main entry as well as other entry points.
- How best to protect sensitive resources.
- Improvements to visitor facilities.
- What are the best ways to capitalize on the interpretive and educational opportunities at The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park.

### ***The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park General Plan***

The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park is managed by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. The General Plan is the primary management document for units of the State Park System, establishing its purpose and a management direction for the future. By providing long-term strategies, guidelines, and goals, the General Plan defines the framework for the park's development, management, and public use. When complete, the General Plan will guide day-to-day decision making and the development of focused management plans and other projects that implement the General Plan's goals.

### ***Where we are in the planning process:***

- Inventory of existing conditions
- Identify issues (public workshops)
- ☒ Prepare alternatives (public workshop)
- ☐ Develop Draft General Plan (public workshop)
- ☐ Prepare Draft Environmental Impact Report (CEQA and public review)
- ☐ State Park and Recreation Commission Approval (public hearing)
- ☐ Prepare Final General Plan and EIR

### ***Next Public Workshop:***

**Thursday, June 28, 2001**

**Mar Vista Elementary School  
Multi-purpose Room  
6860 Soquel Drive, Aptos, California 95003  
6:30 PM TO 8:30 PM**

A range of alternatives addressing the General Plan issues will be presented followed by a public comment period.

The facilities are ADA accessible. Individuals requiring special assistance can leave a message at 831-429-2882.

## ***Summary of Public Workshop Comments:***

### **Public Workshop #1, March 11, 2001**

- Promote Lyme disease awareness
- Concern over public access and parking impacts on private land
- Provide full time/adequate park staff - new facilities/improvements = increased staff
- Maintain park area north of steel bridge as wilderness - prevent bicycle use beyond this point
- Designate large areas as wilderness which contain no trails
- Mangel's Ranch - restore damage to trails, propose a self guided nature trail
- Promote responsible trail design by considering social and environmental issues of Mt. Biking - address the needs of bikers and hikers by proposing single use and multi-use trails
- Nisene 2 Sea Corridor - acquire Koch Property to create a connection from New Brighton State Beach to Nisene Marks State Park, linking with Cabrillo College, and Vienna Woods trailhead loop
- Increase enforcement of park regulations
- Resolve public safety issues/concerns about the impact of speeding vehicles and bicyclists
- Protect park resources and promote watershed management
- Improve existing roads (specifically, roadway south of the steel bridge)
- Protect animal species
- Restore and maintain all park trails
- Increase parking areas at the perimeter as well as within park boundaries - specifically at Hinckley off Olive Springs Road and at Buzzard Lagoon
- Enforce leash laws (dogs)
- Define the involvement of volunteer groups
- Define and promote trail etiquette through signage
- Design/install trails that allow for wheelchair access
- Limit the use of chemical pesticides
- Create signage that teaches the prevention and effects of erosion
- Designate campsites to prevent fire hazards
- Improve emergency response time
- Consider low impact alternatives to the current vehicles which rangers use to patrol the park
- Address/include the wish list's of various advocate groups
- Act as stewards of the park
- Address the educational opportunities of the park
- Enhance fish populations
- Accommodate the multiple users of the park
- Consider construction of multi-use trails and bike trails above Sand Point and limit them below this area
- Continue to follow the intent of the deed restrictions

### **Public Workshop #2 - April 7, 2001**

- Maintain the remoteness of the park
- Promote the multi-use aspect of trails
- Will there be promotional advertisement for the park? (advert on State Parks website)
- Is the park advisory committee still active? - see the Advocates of Nisene Marks
- How will increased development change the park - will additional trails occur in the upper regions?
- Santa Cruz County Horseman's Association would like horseback riding to continue to be allowed in designated areas. The association promotes programs for trail sharing and maintenance, and practices appropriate trail usage to prevent erosion
- The park should be open to appropriate uses while simultaneously promoting preservation
- Trails are overgrown and maintenance needs to occur
- Off road vehicles should be allowed in appropriate areas
- Park resources need to be examined
- Multi-use of the park is an important aspect
- Concern with trash accumulation and lack of public restrooms
- Trails and facilities need to be clearly sign posted
- Concern over the occurrence of rave parties in the park and the lack of rangers to control/respond to the situation
- Maintain the simplicity and beauty of the park
- Encourage native fish habitat
- Mt. bike users tend to carve new trails or expand existing trails causing various hazards
- Continue to allow leashed dogs in park
- Association of Concerned Trailriders (ACT)-concerned about trails and use/impact by all parties
- Mangel's Trail is closed due to erosion from road grading and lack of maintenance, not horses and bicycles, and therefore be reopened for use by these parties
- In upper regions of the park, trash left by users is causing problems
- Installation of a solar phone at Sand Point would be helpful in emergency situations
- Currently, there are no security problems between park and adjacent residents – neighbors would like it to remain this way
- Additional trails will destroy the natural state/wilderness of the park
- Motorcycles and 4 wheel drive traffic are ruining Buzzard Lagoon – concrete posts are ugly and have not helped to reduce traffic
- Concern about gate near Buzzard Lagoon remaining unlocked and open even though it is supposed to be closed
- Mountain Bikers of Santa Cruz promote trail maintenance and responsibility and can provide a large volunteer base
- Hetzer trail erosion was caused by lack of maintenance and not horses

## Who is Visiting The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park?

To assist with the General Plan process, a group of students from Sandy Lydon's Cultural History of the Coast Redwoods class at Cabrillo College volunteered to take visitor surveys to help better understand who is using The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park. The following information was collected from observing 1,825 visitors over several weekday and weekend days in April and May 2001.

### Visitor activities:

hiking or walking	37%
running	30%
bicycling	28%
picnicking	2%
horseback riding	less than 1%
other uses	2%

Of the walkers and runners, approximately 10% had dogs with them (83% were on-leash)

### Visitors from:

Santa Cruz County	88%
Santa Clara County	4%
Elsewhere in California	6%
Out of state	3%

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**To be added to the General Plan Mailing List to receive updates and meeting notices:**

☐ Return this form with your name and address to the address below:

Royston Hanamoto Alley & Abey  
225 Miller Avenue  
Mill Valley, California 94941  
Attn: The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park General Plan

☐ Send your name and address via email to: [nisenemarks@rhaa.com](mailto:nisenemarks@rhaa.com)

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Mill Valley, CA 94941

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